

Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority



MEETING	Executive Committee
DATE OF MEETING	5 February 2020
OFFICER	Calum Bell, Head of Service Development
LEAD MEMBER	Councillor Lesley Clarke OBE
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	2020-2025 Public Safety Plan Consultation: Feedback & Recommendations
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>The 2020-2025 Public Safety Plan (PSP) was approved for public consultation at the Authority's 18 September 2019 meeting. The consultation was open for an eight-week period from 23 September to 18 November 2019. The purpose of this report is to present to the Authority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the feedback received from the consultation; • management responses to the feedback; and, • recommendations following the outcomes of the consultation. <p>At the 18 September Fire Authority meeting, officers indicated that they would also review the draft PSP in light of findings of the HMICFRS inspection that was reported to the Authority at the Extraordinary meeting on 23 January 2020. Officers have done so, and consider that the recommendations relating to the 'causes of concern' have, or can, be addressed within the broad scope of the Public Safety Plan and its associated consultation programme. Areas identified for improvement by the HMICFRS will be considered and addressed in the 2020-2025 Corporate Plan, which underpins and programmes projects and key tasks arising from the proposals contained in the Public Safety Plan. The new Corporate Plan will be presented to the 25 March Executive Committee for recommendation for approval at the June Fire Authority meeting.</p>
ACTION	Decision
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p>It is recommended:</p> <p>that the Authority be recommend to approve that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the 2020-2025 Public Safety Plan be adopted; 2. Officers be directed to proceed with the further development of the strategy proposals set out at Page 32 of the 2020-2025 Public Safety Plan

	<p>(Annex 3) having regard to the consultation feedback as they are progressed and to undertake further consultations with stakeholders potentially affected by any specific changes arising from their implementation; and,</p> <p>3. the Chief Fire Officer be granted discretion to determine the sequencing and timing of the work required to further progress the proposals.</p>
<p>RISK MANAGEMENT</p>	<p>Continued re-engineering of our service provision to reflect the changing nature of risk and demand in the community may present opportunities to further mitigate a number of our key corporate risks. However, as the HMICFRS found in their first inspection the “...service is facing significant financial constraints” and “fundamentally ...does not have enough people and money” (HMICFRS report at p.6).</p> <p>Staff availability is also another significant area of risk identified within our Corporate Risk Register. Modernising and continually improving the flexibility of our employment propositions, as envisaged in the 2020-2025 Public Safety Plan, will also present opportunities to improve staff retention and recruitment thus enhancing staff availability and general resilience relative to this important area of risk.</p> <p>Regarding the public consultation process, a detailed risk assessment was carried out with Opinion Research Services at the project planning stage and a risk log established within the Project Initiation Document with appropriate measures identified to control the identified risks. The key risks arising out of the research process include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that the range of views expressed are not representative of those of the public as a whole; and, • that the research is poorly executed and fails to meet the specified requirements. <p>Both of these risks could impair the decision-making process in relation to the Public Safety Plan were they to crystallise. The first risk is controlled via the focus group recruitment process which is designed to ensure that a representative sample of the public is selected by using quotas for age, gender, ethnicity, disability and geographic factors. The second, via ORS’ training and research methods which are fully accredited to relevant British, ISO and Interviewer Quality Control Scheme standards. Opinion Research Services are also a Market Research Society (MRS) Company Partner and are fully compliant with the MRS Code of Conduct.</p>
<p>FINANCIAL</p>	<p>The cost of Phase One of the consultation was £13,550</p>

IMPLICATIONS	which was paid during the 2018/19 financial year. The cost of this phase of the consultation, was £17,315 (as well as a further five focus groups this included provision of an online consultation channel to facilitate a wider response from members of the public, Authority staff and other external stakeholders plus venue hire and ORS facilitator expenses). This cost has been met from existing revenue budget resources. Further consultation and other costs may arise depending on the nature of and outcomes of the various proposals contained in the plan. The costs and benefits arising from any recommended changes to service provision will be accounted for by our Medium-Term Financial Planning process.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	The approach to the consultation complies with National Framework requirements by ensuring that consultation is undertaken at appropriate points in the Integrated Risk Management/Public Safety Plan development process. The outcomes of the consultation are not binding on the Authority. However, it is required to have regard to them in reaching decisions associated with the Public Safety Plan where relevant
CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE	The National Framework requires every fire and rescue authority to produce its own Integrated Risk Management/Public Safety Plan. However, officers share thinking on approaches to plan development and consultation practices with other fire and rescue services, in particular our Thames Valley partners. The draft Public Safety Plan also identifies opportunities to continue and further collaboration where appropriate.
HEALTH AND SAFETY	No direct implications arising from the draft Public Safety Plan. Any proposals for change arising from the Plan will include evaluation of the health and safety implications.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY	<p>The selection process for the public focus groups was designed to ensure that a representative sample of the public was consulted. A socio-demographic profile of the public focus group participants is shown at page 15 of Annex 1. This indicates that they were a broad cross section of residents from local areas.</p> <p>Participation in the online survey was by open invitation so the views expressed via this channel cannot be certified as being necessarily representative of the views of the general public, staff or other stakeholders as a whole. However, all staff and a wide range of organisations were encouraged to take part in the feedback process which yielded a diverse range of views and opinions.</p>
USE OF RESOURCES	The Plan sets out the Authority's strategic approach to

delivery of its vision of making Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes the safest areas in England in which to live, work and travel.

Communication with stakeholders;

The development of the Plan was informed by an initial public consultation carried out in November / December 2018 to explore public expectations of the Service and awareness of the issues and challenges facing it together with some of the ways we might potentially respond to these. A summary of the outcomes of the consultation is contained in the Plan and was reported on in full to Members at the February 2019 Fire Authority meeting. Informal consultations have also taken place with Service Managers and the Representative Bodies during the development of the draft Public Safety Plan and formal 'gateway' reviews were undertaken by the Business Transformation Board on 1 August 2019 and Strategic Management Board on 13 August 2019.

The system of internal control;

The progress of the public consultation was overseen by the Business Transformation and Strategic Management Boards.

The medium-term financial strategy;

No direct implications arising from the consultation process. However, the medium-term financial strategy will be informed by the interdependencies between the Public Safety Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan. The balance between spending and resources. The immediate costs arising from the public consultation will be met from current financial year budgeted resources. Costs associated with the pursuit of the proposals contained in the draft Public Safety Plan will be factored in to future budget planning.

The management of the asset base;

The 2020-2025 Public Safety Plan may have implications for current property and fleet related assets. These will be considered in our Property and Fleet Management strategies. The arrangements to promote and ensure probity and propriety These are assured by compliance with National Framework requirements relating to the development of, and consultation for, Integrated Risk Management Plans.

Environmental;

The 2020–2025 Public Safety Plan commits the Authority to identifying and acting on opportunities to reduce its carbon footprint.

Also, where appropriate, any changes arising from the outcomes of the reviews of service provision contained in the Plan will be subject to environmental impact

	assessments.												
<p>PROVENANCE SECTION & BACKGROUND PAPERS</p>	<p>The consultation sought to obtain the views of a representative cross section of the public and engage a wide range of other stakeholders including staff, representative bodies, community and partner organisations in the consideration of the issues and proposals contained in the Public Safety Plan.</p> <p>Consultation programme</p> <p>This comprised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A series of five focus groups with members of the public facilitated by Opinion Research Services (ORS), independent research specialists; and • An online questionnaire, hosted by ORS and accessible via the Authority’s website, which was open to all staff, members of the public and representatives of partner and community organisations. Awareness of the consultation was raised by targeting a range of community and partner organisations by letter and email. The consultation was also publicised on the Authority’s website and via social media channels with the following effects: <table border="1" data-bbox="724 1084 1339 1361"> <thead> <tr> <th>Media</th> <th>Articles / Posts</th> <th>Views</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Website</td> <td>2</td> <td>1,200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FaceBook</td> <td>7</td> <td>11,600</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Twitter</td> <td>13</td> <td>37,100</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Response</p> <p>A total of 55 diverse members of the public participated in the focus groups. There was a total of 58 responses to the online questionnaire. Seven of these were from respondents identifying as Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service staff, although the actual level of response may have been higher with some preferring to identify as residents or not to say. Eight organisations also responded to the consultation via the questionnaire. A full profile of online respondents is shown at Tables 1 – 5 on pages 11–12 of Annex 1. A further nine responses were received by email or letter (seven from individual respondents and two from organisations). Summary feedback from these is included at Annex 2.</p> <p>Background Papers</p> <p>Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018):</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-</p>	Media	Articles / Posts	Views	Website	2	1,200	FaceBook	7	11,600	Twitter	13	37,100
Media	Articles / Posts	Views											
Website	2	1,200											
FaceBook	7	11,600											
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	<p>and-rescue-national-framework-for-england--2</p> <p>2015-2020 Public Safety Plan: https://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/8114/2116/4524/2015-20 PUBLIC SAFETY PLAN Updated after 17 Dec CFA.pdf</p> <p>2020 – 2025 Public Safety Plan – “Listening & Engagement” Research Report: https://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/4915/4894/2682/ITEM_12 Outcomes of 2020-2025 PUBLIC SAFETY PLAN Focus Groups Report Appendix.pdf</p> <p>Draft 2020-2025 PSP & Consultation Plan as approved at the 18 September 2019 Fire Authority meeting: https://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/8915/6797/6225/ITEM_10 Draft 2020-25 PSP 18 September CFA Cover Paper Annexes-min.pdf</p>
<p>APPENDICES</p>	<p>Annexures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ORS Report of Consultation Findings 2. Service management responses to consultation feedback. 3. Finalised 2020-2025 Public Safety Plan for decision.
<p>TIME REQUIRED</p>	<p>30 Minutes</p>
<p>REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT</p>	<p>Stuart Gowanlock, Corporate Planning Manager sgowanlock@bucksfire.gov.uk</p>